

REMARKS

Claims 9, 10, 12, 13, 15-16 and 22-31 are pending. By this Amendment, independent claims 9, 10, 22 and 23 are amended, no claims are cancelled, and no claims are added. Support for the amendments can be found in the original specification as filed, including for example: page 3, line 21 to page 4, line 9; page 4, lines 30-31; page 9, lines 8-15; page 13, lines 15-33; and FIGS. 2a-2g and FIG. 3.

**Telephonic Interview Summary**

Applicants thank Examiner Michael Aboagye and his supervisor, Jessica Ward, for the courtesy extended to their undersigned representative, in a telephone interview on August 4, 2009. During the telephone interview, the Forrest et al. reference and proposed amendments to independent claims 10, 11, 22 and 23 were discussed, and agreement was reached that the attached amendments to independent claims 10, 11, 22 and 23 overcome the pending rejections.

**Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Previously claims 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16 and 22-31 were rejected in the Office Action dated December 12, 2008 under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious based on US Patent No. 6,398,883 to Forrest et al. In response to this rejection, the attached amendments to independent claims 10, 11, 22 and 23 further clarify the claimed invention. As discussed with the Examiner and the Examiner's supervisor during the telephonic interview, the attached amendments overcome the pending rejection as the Forrest et al. reference fails to teach, disclose or suggest friction stir welding regions of two metal work-pieces prior to the two metal work-pieces being fusion welded, such that regions of the work-pieces that melt during the fusion welding process are at least partially encompassed within the friction stir welded regions of the two metal work-pieces.

Application No. 10/533,177

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian L. Stender', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

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